

Head Start/ Early Head Start

At the 2019 First Steps Conference on June 13–14, Christina Commons moderated an informative panel session with state partners and stakeholders who work alongside the First Steps program to provide

needed services for children and families. Each partner shared information about their program and how it intersects with First Steps. See below to read a summary of answers from Head Start/Early Head Start.

2019 FIRST STEPS CONFERENCE

STAKEHOLDER PANEL

Head Start/Early Head Start wants First Steps providers to know that parent volunteers help Head Start and Early Head Start Programs work.

A brief description of the program Head Start and Early Head Start are regionally based, federally funded comprehensive services that support children and families; Early Head Start serves pregnant women and infants and toddlers up to age 3 and Head Start serves children and families ages 3 to kindergarten entry.

Are there common misunderstandings or misconceptions of Head Start/Early Head Start that should be corrected?

That Head Start is just free child care; it is truly a program designed to support the education and engagement of children and families by building in family engagement, parental education and comprehensive services that support a healthy and growing family. Family engagement is key!

What is the eligibility requirement for Early Head Start/Head Start for children in relative placement via the Indiana Department of Child Services?

Basic eligibility is an income level of 100% of federal poverty level, with foster children, homeless children and families being a priority regardless of income.

Would the income requirements ever be waived for families with children that have IFSPs or IEPs in order to fill that 10% of kids with disabilities are attending the program?

Income levels are waived for foster children and homeless families, and there is additional wiggle room based on different types of need. Each grantee utilizes a system to wait the needs of applicants.

How does Early Head Start/Head Start intersect with First Steps?

Many Early Head Start programs work closely with First Steps via referrals and support; Head Start programs typically work directly with local education agencies for services.

Does Head Start/Early Head Start staff share information about First Steps?

Absolutely! There is a very positive relationship between Early Head Starts and First Steps, and there is a strong respect for the support that First Steps offers to families.

What is one thing First Steps providers should share with families?

Let families know that Head Start is there to support the entire family's growth through education and comprehensive service.

How can First Steps providers work more effectively with Head Start/Early Head Start?

Through a direct exchange of information and reciprocal referrals to both programs.

Contact information

For more detailed information about Early Head Start and Head Start and to find contact information for specific counties, please [visit our website](#).



www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/2679.htm
Toll-free 866-763-6481